*Dewan's reply.*—Your many suggestions will be referred to the Registrar of Co-operative Societies and we shall see what can be done. As you observe, there is no sphere of human activity where co-operation cannot be beneficial. Everything depends upon the spirit in which the work is done and the enthusiasm with which it is carried out. You say that, in regard to agricultural loans, the poor are experiencing difficulties. This has been mentioned by more than one member in the Assembly. You say that the landed security offered for the loans may be inspected by agricultural officers. That is not necessary. The rules do not require that such lands should be inspected by agricultural officers. Inspection by departmental officers is provided for only in the case of machinery, *i. e.*, where machinery is sought to be installed or where the loan is required under the new Industrial Loan Rules. It is only there that the advice of an expert is required. In the case of ordinary applications for loans, the value of the land is determined by the revenue officers. Applications may, no doubt, be received by agricultural officers, but they will have to be sent on to the revenue officers for disposal.

Your suggestion as regards the grant of loans through Co-operative Societies is a useful one. The Registrar of Co-operative Societies has not yet made any such suggestion. I shall ask him to examine the matter and make definite proposals to Government. By the adoption of this [illegible] some of the difficulties pointed out by you, as, for example, that of finding s[illegible]security for the money advanced, might be overcome, as the security provided [illegible]Co-operative Societies is much better than the security given by individuals.

You complain of want of sufficient funds to finance the Co-operative Societies. But some days back, Mr. G. Paramesvaran Pillai, the Secretary of the Trivandrum Central Co-operative Bank, was telling me that there was not sufficient demand from societies for the money in the bank and he was asking me for permission to deposit the bank's unutilised funds in the treasury savings banks. I cannot reconcile these conflicting statements. If what both you and Mr. G. Paramesvaran Pillai tell me is true, it reflects a sad state of affairs. It shows that the primary societies and the Central Co-operative Bank are not in sufficient touch with each other.

The Agricultural Department has already arranged to sell manures through the agency of Co-operative Societies. Co-operative Societies can maintain breed-bulls also. They can take lands for cultivation under the Land Colonisation Scheme. There is no limit to the activities of Co-operative Societies.

## V. PUBLIC WORKS.

### 56. The institution of Village Irrigation (Agricultural) Boards.

*Mr. M. C. Narayana Pillai B. A.* (Member, Trivandrum Taluk) stated, at the outset, that agriculture was the earliest industry to be pursued in Travancore, and that, since it centred round food, it was the basic or mother industry. Although Government had recognised the importance of that industry and created a separate department for its development and expansion, the people in general were not quite satisfied with the results achieved till now, nor had the benefits of the department reached the masses. It was impossible for a Government to influence individually thousands of petty peasants who were themselves too isolated, too suspicious and too shy to accept new ideas and undertake experiments in new methods. Further, they were too poor and powerless to raise the best products or to get the better of the middle men and the best from the market. The remedy lay in the formation of an organisation which would act as an intermediary between the Government and the individual—an organisation which could be advised, educated, reasoned with and listened to, which could discuss the suggestions of the authorities and absorb new ideas, find courage and funds to undertake new methods, and combine both for the improvement of the products of their labour and for their prompt and advantageous sale.

The Member thought that the formation of Village Panchayats would not secure the end in view, as its scope was too wide and as it imposed an additional tax on the already heavily-taxed poor ryots. Hence he suggested the formation of village associations or boards for the purpose.



LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

*Dewan's reply.*—It seems to me that separate agricultural boards as suggested by you would result in a multiplicity of organisations which would be working at cross purposes.

*Member.*—Agriculture is an important subject.

*Dewan.*—Agriculture is very important; cottage industry is very important; sanitation is very important; roads and communications are also very important.

*Member.*—Sanitation is not important.

*Dewan.*—It may not be very important in some parts of the country;but it is very important in some others. There is more than one vital function to be performed in a village and one organised board should suffice for the discharge of all those functions. You are aiming at village autonomy, which is a desirable thing. You want the people of the village to concentrate their attention on matters of importance to the village, and to have a dominating voice in their administration. It is a desirable object. It is with that view that the constitution of Village Panchayats is proposed by the Government. The improvement of agriculture is one of the functions of such Panchayats as defined in that Bill. If you want separate sub-committees of that board to devote special attention to agriculture, etc., I believe there will be no objection to it. As far as I remember, the Bill provides for co-option of members, for the appointment of sub-committees and the co-ordination of the activities of such sub-committees.

*Member.*—But it would be imposing another tax.

*Dewan.*—That is a different matter. You cannot, as they say in Tamil, measure with an empty fore-arm. You want the wherewithal for conducting your operations. There is no real disagreement between you and the Government. All that I say is that we should not create a separate board for each and every function. It is, however, a matter of detail which may be considered later.

**57. Erection of a water-reservoir for the benefit of lands near Aramboly and the application of the Remission Rules to those lands.**

*Mr. Narasingamurtia Pillai Agastyalingam Pillai* (Member, Tovala Taluk) said that, though the Government had sanctioned a sum of Rs. 56,000 for works in connection with the improvement of tanks at Aramboly, and the Erappayar diversion, the latter had consumed Rs. 16,000, and, although including that amount, a sum of Rs. 33,000 had actually been spent on the works, Aramboly had not derived any benefit so far. He also observed that the tanks there had not been thoroughly improved and rendered fit for storing water for agricultural purposes. He, therefore, prayed that a reservoir might be constructed at Poygayar as recommended by Mr. Horsely several years ago and as prayed for by the people of the locality, so as to irrigate an area of 7,000 acres of land. By the construction of such a reservoir all the water that was at present running waste through the Tovala under-tunnel and the *odais* of Nellayadi, Punkanadi and Sraravashi could be stored for purposes of irrigation. The Member also submitted that the provision of petty sums to the extent of Rs. 2,000 or so for the repair of the tanks in Aramboly was useless.

He then requested that the old practice of allowing remissions for failure of crops be again brought into force.

In conclusion, the Member complained that court fees were now imposed on applications for relief under the Irrigation Regulation and prayed that the practice might be stopped.

*Dewan's reply.*— I agree with you in thinking that the allotment of small sums of money like Rs. 2,000 for the repairs of irrigation works in any part of the country serves no useful purpose. The Chief Engineer has promised to look into this matter and to allot a larger amount in the next year's budget for the repair of some of your tanks.

In regard to the irrigation of 7,000 acres of land, as suggested by Mr. Horsely, the question of the construction of the necessary reservoir has got to be investigated. I shall ask the Chief Engineer to do it.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly